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Behind the CIA Curtain

Sen. Eugene McCarthy (D-Minn.) will introduce a resolution on Monday authorizing Sen. Fulbright's Foreign Relations Committee to conduct a full-scale investigation of the shadowy, subterranean operations of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Such an inquiry is overdue. We warmly support the McCarthy resolution.

The country has obtained some glimpses of CIA's far-flung activities from the Bay of Pigs to other fiascos. CIA's apologists have argued that its successes must remain secret; no doubt these will be unfolded one day. But the available evidence, documented in David Wise's informed study of the agency and in other

post-mortems on several debacles, is that CIA has assumed the dimensions of a private government. It long ago trespassed beyond its authorized function of gathering information. It has sponsored plot and counter-plot in many places — sometimes in defiance of official government policy. It has tenaciously evaded any serious Congressional examination of its works.

A sweeping Senate inquiry might well create some embarrassments if it exposed our super-secret agents with their cloaks and daggers showing. But, more importantly, it might help to avert future chaos and confusion. CIA's officialdom has too long occupied a privileged sanctuary.